SNM—Looking Forward in Many New Ways

As SNM enters a new year, we are looking forward to a large number of new, important, and exciting projects that range from efforts to increase PET utilization to developing new curricula that support increased and advancing educational needs. Following is a sampling of some of the initiatives that SNM is spearheading in the year ahead. Continue to read *Newsline* in coming months for more detailed information.

SNM PET Center of Excellence (PET CoE). The PET CoE created the PET Utilization Task Force in January 2008 to address the importance of encouraging PET utilization, and the task force developed specific working groups to address these areas. In September 2008 the task force held a retreat to discuss the progress made to date and to establish new and future goals. The continued areas of focus for the working groups are: *Referring Physicians*—to understand the perceived strengths and weaknesses of PET/CT and act to meet the needs of referring physicians and those in the PET industry; *Practice Guidelines*—to identify areas in which PET/CT is underutilized and to undertake a focused effort to update practice guidelines in those areas; *Research*—to develop standardized research methodology for use in cost-effective analyses; and *Nuclear Medicine Physicians and Radiologists*—to expand PET and PET/CT guidelines and to help nuclear medicine physicians learn how to interpret CT and radiologists learn how to interpret PET. In addition, the task force developed 2 new working groups: *Reimbursement*—to address current and evolving PET/CT coverage problems for common and generally approved and accepted indications; and *Message Integration and Outreach*—to focus on outreach and execution of the task force's activities. For the coming year, the working groups have laid out steps to be taken in each area. Those interested in becoming involved should contact PET CoE Program Manager Jenny Mills at jmills@snm.org.

SNM Molecular Imaging Center of Excellence (MICoE). The MICoE has made tremendous strides in creating molecular imaging benefits and resources, and its members are maintaining that momentum. In 2009, the center will create a membership campaign to attract molecular imaging professionals. A visit to Capitol Hill is planned in April to advance molecular imaging issues among policymakers. Also in April, MICoE will sponsor a Multimodality Cardiovascular Molecular Imaging Symposium at NIH. A speakers bureau continues to educate the medical community about molecular imaging. The center will also further develop and enhance the molecular imaging community Web site to provide online information, education, and training for a wide array of audiences; focus on creating and strengthening collaborative relationships within the wider medical community and patient groups; continue ongoing projects such as the *MI Gateway* and other publications; and provide input to SNM in many other functional areas.

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The Journal of Nuclear Medicine. *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*—now rated second among all medical imaging journals—is transitioning to full color, beginning with this issue. This will enhance the value of images and the attractiveness and readability of the journal, at no cost to authors. In May, *JNM* will publish a supplement on monitoring therapy with PET.

Grants and Awards. SNM/Education and Research Foundation will continue the successful 2008 grants and awards program in 2009 for both SNM and SNMTS. SNM awards that were new in 2008 and will continue in 2009 include a research grant for junior medical faculty, a postdoctoral MI scholar program, and travel awards. SNMTS awards include travel awards, bachelor's degree completion, student travel awards, and a clinical advancement scholarship. In total, the program includes more than $350,000 in SNM, SNMTS, and Professional Development and Education Fund grants, awards, and scholarships for more than 145 researchers, physicians, and technologists.

The SNM Clinical Trials Network. Our meetings over recent years with representatives from federal agencies—the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services, National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and Department of Energy—and members of key associations, research organizations, and pharmaceutical companies have resulted in the creation of the SNM Clinical Trials Network (CTN). This new initiative reaches across the domains of pharmaceutical development, imaging, radiopharmaceutical manufacturing, and regulatory agencies to integrate the use of investigational imaging biomarkers into multicenter clinical trials and bring new drugs to market more quickly and efficiently. The network is designed to provide centralized investigational new drugs (INDs) for biomarkers of interest to the pharmaceutical and imaging communities and coordinate standardized imaging protocols across qualified multicenter clinical trial sites. Large trials of investigational therapeutics can often demonstrate safety and efficacy more efficiently if imaging biomarkers are included in the protocols. As a result, drug development time will be reduced and both imaging and

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requirements that seek similar information.

To read the final rule and access more information about PSOs, including background on the rulemaking process, visit AHRQ's PSO Web site at www.pso.ahrq.gov. Additional information about the confidentiality and disclosure of patient safety work product may be found at OCR's Web site at www.hhs.gov/ocr/psqia/.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

DOE Supercomputer Fastest for Open Science

On November 10 the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced that the latest upgrade to the Cray XT Jaguar supercomputer at its Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) had increased the system's computing power to a peak 1.64 "petaflops" (quadrillion mathematical calculations per second), making Jaguar the world's first petaflop system dedicated to open research. Scientists have already used the newly upgraded Jaguar to complete an unprecedented superconductivity calculation that achieved a sustained performance of more than 1.3 petaflops.

"Jaguar is one of science's newest and most formidable tools for advancement in science and engineering," said Raymond L. Orbach, PhD, DOE Under Secretary for Science. "It will enable researchers to simulate physical processes on a scale never seen before and approach convergence for dynamical processes never thought possible. High-end computation will become the critical third pillar for scientific discovery, along with experiment and theory."

The upgrade at DOE's Oak Ridge National Leadership Computing Facility represents a major milestone in a 4-y project begun in 2004 when the DOE Office of Science launched a sustained effort to upgrade supercomputing capabilities for unclassified research at DOE national laboratories. The project to build a petaflops machine included partnerships with industry to develop new hardware and computer architectures.

Within hours of access to the Oak Ridge supercomputer, an ORNL team became the first to achieve sustained petascale performance on a scientific application. In 1998, another ORNL team was the first to achieve sustained terascale performance for science. Supercomputing holds significant promise for U.S. economic competitiveness, including the promise of enabling American industry to perform "virtual prototyping" of complex systems and products. Jaguar will enable companies to reduce development costs and shorten the time required to market new technologies. Jaguar is the result of a partnership among DOE, ORNL, and Cray that has pushed computing capability at a rapid pace. The current upgrade is the result of an addition of 200 cabinets of Cray XT5 to the existing 84 cabinets of the XT4 Jaguar system.

Eighty percent of the Leadership Computing Facility resources are allocated each year through DOE's Innovative and Novel Computational Impact on Theory and Experiment program, a competitively selected, peer-reviewed process open to researchers from universities, industry, government, and nonprofit organizations.

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pharmaceutical development will benefit. With the approval of the first multicenter IND for ^{18}F-fluorothymidine (FLT) in September of this year, the SNM Clinical Trials Network has achieved an important early success toward integrating imaging biomarkers into therapeutic clinical trials. More information about the CTN and the ways in which it will facilitate drug development will be presented at a workshop on February 8 and 9, immediately after SNM's Mid-Winter Educational Symposium in Clearwater, FL.

Education. In the coming year, members will focus on developing new molecular imaging fellowship and residency curricula, as well as creating new sessions and courses. In addition, SNM will launch a new series of basic science lectures to supplement existing courses offered in PET/CT, cardiac PET/CT, neurology PET/CT, and other areas. SNMTS is moving forward with the curricula for its new 4-y baccalaureate degree and its advanced associate degree, for which the first class will be offered this year. Largely as a result of these advances in education, SNMTS has received approval from the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists as a Recognized Continuing Education Evaluation Mechanism (RCEEM+) provider—1 of only 3 organizations to achieve this ranking.

SNM's leaders, volunteers, and staff keep moving forward by undertaking and leading projects that are important to the profession—expanding services to members and improving the practice of nuclear medicine. If you have questions about any part of SNM, please contact headquarters staff at 800-487-5620.

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